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TREATY BRANCH
OFFICE OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

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Rome, Italy, February 5, 1948

No. 219

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SUBJECT: Press Coverage of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation

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The Ambassador has the honor to transmit for the Department's information, press clippings describing the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation at Palazzo Chigi on February 2. Also enclosed are copies of the addresses delivered on this occasion by the Ambassador and Count Sforza. Copies of the notes exchanged between the Foreign Minister and the Ambassador on this same occasion on the subject of favoring and expanding the cultural relations between the peoples of the United States and Italy are also enclosed.

This treaty was given prominent national coverage for three days and inspired much favorable comment in all papers except those of the Communist Party. The Socialist paper, AVANTI which usually expresses the same point of view as the Communist L'UNITA reported the treaty fully without adverse comment, probably because Ivan Matteo Lombardo is still a member of the Nenni Socialist Party.

The following additional comments taken from the press are submitted to amplify those quoted in Embassy press telegram No. 471, February 3.

The Communist L'UNITA printed an interview with Eugene Reale (a party member). He is quoted as saying "he felt bound to re-affirm the reservations formulated last August when the first indiscretions concerning the agreement which I.M. Lombardo was about to negotiate leaked out. The thing which strikes the eye most of all is that the rights and privileges assured, under the treaty, to the nationals of the two countries, of which one is enormously wealthy and the other appallingly poor, can be enjoyed almost exclusively by the Americans because they alone have the economic and financial possibilities required to make use of those rights and privileges. It is enough to mention emigration from which our fellow countrymen will continue to be debarred." Referring to the clause concerning the free exchange of information, Sig. Reale said that he was rather sceptical. "The recent incident of the foreign journalists accredited to UNO, who were arrested on U.S. territory and for whose release the Secretary General of UNO had to intervene, makes me fear that in effect the freedom of information will be granted only by us. The same applies to the freedom of transit across the territories of the two contracting parties; in this connection we cannot but recall the objections raised recently to the concession of a visa to Prof. Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, who was going to Mexico as official delegate of the Italian

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Government to the UNESCO Conference and who, owing to his being a Communist, was refused transit through the United States." He did not agree with the view expressed in certain newspapers that the approval of the Treaty by the Constituent Assembly Treaties Commission would be enough for the Treaty to come into force. "There is no doubt that the Treaty will have to be approved by secret voting by the newly elected Chamber."

The following favorable comments are typical of most printed in newspapers throughout Italy.

IL POPOLO - "The Treaty may be regarded as a model for documents of its kind. The Treaty between the U.S.A. and Italy should be followed by others; a treaty between Italy and Great Britain is envisaged."

IL MESSAGGERO - "Italy, in signing the Treaty of Friendship with the U.S.A., emerges from the painful stage of the peace treaty and enters into a new stage in which she will be able to negotiate the terms of cordial collaboration, in the fields of labour and trade, with the other Powers on a footing of equality. It is significant that the new phase should be inaugurated with the Treaty with the U.S.A., which is a further proof of America's friendship towards Italy but represents also a success for the De Gasperi Government."

IL TEMPO- "It is significant that the first treaty of the kind signed by Italy after the war should be concluded with the U.S.A., the only Power which since 1943 has helped and continues to help the Italian people. All the other conversations and agreements stipulated by the Italian Government after the peace treaty of February 1947 have a limited scope and a special character of their own. The treaty with the U.S.A. contains a novelty; it guarantees the free exchange of information. This is an important step from the commercial to the political sphere. It is a well-known fact that the first restriction imposed by dictatorships concerns the press and the free flow of news. In application of a principle which was reaffirmed during and after the war, the U.S.A. can have stable and lasting relations only with the States in which it is possible to know and report all that is going on. Wherever the iron curtain exists and facts are manipulated and made known only through Government propaganda or kept entirely secret, there is certainly a class or party totalitarian regime. The treaty derives special significance from the circumstances in which it is signed. That U.S. warships should visit Italian ports is a perfectly normal occurrence; nevertheless, the fact is new, is characteristic of the post-war period and proves that the U.S.A. has vital interests in the Mediterranean, Africa and the Middle East. It is probable that the fact would not have taken place if Russia did not occupy militarily all the countries of the Western bloc and did not impose Communist regimes on them."

IL GIORNALE D'ITALIA-"This absolutely new provision (free exchange of information) in treaties of this kind reveals the spirit animating the two democracies. Democracy cannot exist in those countries in which one cannot listen to, discuss and refute the arguments of his adversaries. Russia is contrary to the freedom of the press, to the free exchange of information and news because she is afraid that an

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opposition movement may be created. Those who would like to see a hungry Italy turning desperately to Communism and Slav imperialism, all those who will seize upon the Treaty to denounce Italy's alleged subservience to the U.S.A. will certainly ignore the fundamental principle of the free exchange of information. There is one very simple thing to point out to those who will find in the treaty another pretext for sabotaging the Marshall Plan which guarantees bread and work to the Italian people: let Russia do what the U.S.A. has done; let Russia allow her citizens to go about the world and the citizens of the world to visit Russia, and war will certainly be averted.

"The Italo-American Treaty constitues an example which all peace-loving countries should follow. The Treaty is a re-assuring factor; it is important not only for its material advantages but mainly for its moral and political value. The Treaty means that America has confidence in us and that Italy must have confidence in the U.S.A. It is an encouragement and a guarantee."

Enclosures:

1. Clippings describing the signing of Treaty

2. Copies of address delivered by Ambassador Dunn

3. Copies of address delivered by Count Sforza.

4. Copy of notes exchanged between the Foreign Minister and the Ambassador

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